DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 037 586 24 AA 000 519

AUTHOR	Garland, William E.
TITLE	Traditional African Religion: A Resource Unit.
INSTITUTION	Carnegie-Mellom Univ., Pittsburgh, Pa. Project Africa.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education, Washington, D.C.
BUREAU NO	BR-7-0724
PUB DATE	70
NOTE	73p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.50 HC-$3.75
DESCRIPTORS	*African Culture, African History, *Annotated Bibliographies, High School Students, Instructional Materials, *Non Western Civilization, *Religious Conflict, *Social Studies Units
IDENTIFIERS	*Project Africa

ABSTRACT

This resource unit is based on research conducted by Lynn Mitchell and Ernest Valenzuela, experienced classroom teachers of African history and culture. The unit consists of an introduction by Mr. Garland and two major parts. Part I is an annotated bibliography of selected sources on various aspects of traditional African Religion useful in classroom study. Part II consists of a model teaching unit of two weeks duration, built on an inquiry teaching strategy and utilizes a variety of audio and visual as well as written materials designed for use by high school students. The teaching plan and instructional materials which comprise this unit have not been tested in any classroom setting but are presented as a model of one possible way to introduce a study of traditional African religion. Related documents are ED 023 692, ED 023 693, ED 030 010, ED 032 324-ED 032 327, and ED 033 249. (Author/LS)

AA 000 519

BR 7 0724
PA-24

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

A RESOURCE UNIT

ED 037 586

PROJECT AFRICA
Carnegie-Mellon University
1970

FOR EXPERIMENTAL USE ONLY

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

A RESOURCE UNIT

PROJECT AFRICA
1970

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education.

Project Africa
Baker Hall
Carnegie-Mellon University
Schenley Park
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

Preface

This resource unit has been prepared by William E. Garland, research associate on the staff of Project Africa, a social studies curriculum research and development project located at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It is based on research conducted by Lynn Mitchell and Ernest Valenzuela, experienced classroom teachers of African history and culture. The unit itself has been designed in consultation with leading specialists on African religion and culutre, including Dr. Fela Sowande of Howard University, and the Cultural Affairs Office of the Nigerian Embassy in Washington, D.C..

This resource unit consists of an introduction and two major parts. In the introduction, Mr. Garland outlines several different ways to organize a study of traditional African religion and points out some problems inherent in each approach.

An annotated bibliography of selected sources on various aspects of traditional African religion comprises Part I of this report. Included here are brief descriptions of selected materials that will prove useful in classroom study of traditional African religion. These materials have been classified and annotated in a variety of ways. Reference to this list may provide materials and/or ideas which will make possible the development of units of study on traditional African religion organized along the lines of one or more of the approaches suggested by Mr. Garland or devised by any classroom teacher.

Part II of this report consists of a model teaching unit of two weeks' duration. This unit is built on an inquiry-teaching strategy and utilizes a variety of audio and visual as well as written materials to explore the functionality of African religion as well as the nature

of African and our own religious experience. It has been designed for use by high school seniors.

This teaching unit, as reprinted here, includes daily lesson plans, outlines of all audio and visual materials and copies of all handouts, work sheets and study guides designed for student use. The unit concludes with a copy of reading materials selected for student use. All teacher materials in this resource unit are printed on yellow paper. Materials for use by the students are printed on white paper to facilitate duplication by a thermofax or other similar process.

It should be noted that the teaching plan and instructional materials which comprise this unit, while designed by experienced classroom teachers, have <u>not</u> been tested in any classroom setting. They may or may not be immediately useful for any specific curriculum or group of students. They are presented here, rather, as a <u>model</u> of one possible way to introduce a study of traditional African religion--as a suggested teaching unit which a teacher may revise, build on or excerpt from as his and his students' objectives, interests and abilities dictate.

This report is by no means presented as a "final product" but rather as a resource--something to be drawn on in building a specific learning experience for a specific group of students. When this bibliography and this teaching unit are used in this fashion, they will hopefully contribute to exciting and usable classroom learning about Africa and even, perhaps, about ourselves.

Carnegie-Mellon University
Spring, 1970

Barry K. Beyer, Director
Project Africa

CONTENTS

Preface

Traditional African Religion--An Introduction i

Part I: Selected Materials on Traditional African Religion 1

Part II: A Teaching Unit on Traditional African Religion 17

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

Africa south of the Sahara is a land of immense variety and sharp constrasts. Nowhere are these features more evident than in the religions practiced by the peoples living in this vast region. A great number of religions flourish in the area south of the Sahara. Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity - Coptic as well as Protestant and Catholic - number their adherents in the tens of thousands, indeed, sometimes in the millions. Numerous other religious sects also abound - sects that are indigenous to Africa itself. In fact, it is these indigenous religions that are the very essence of the real Africa, that sustain and integrate the lives and cultures of the peoples by whom they are practiced.

Approaches to Studying African Religions

One way to gain a better and deeper understanding of the peoples of Africa south of the Sahara, of their value systems, the habitat in which they live, their history, and, indeed, the entire political, social, economic and ideational milieu in which they live - their total culture - is through a study of indigenous African religions both in their traditional forms and under the impact of alien beliefs and ways of life. Such a study might be organized in any number of ways depending primarily upon the specific learning objectives selected.

A very simple approach might well be to survey briefly some of the religious beliefs or practices of selected African peoples. Such an approach has serious limitations, however. Exposure to magic, witchcraft, divination, ancestor worship and native deities - all pervasive features of traditional African religions - might result primarily in a denigration of these features and practices as "savage" or "primitive." Involvement in such a study could easily lead students to respond, as did one young Black girl:

> I <u>thought</u> that paganism was wrong but (pause) now it seems like it <u>really</u> <u>is</u> wrong to worship a snake, a dog or a tree....

Such an attitude often seems to persist even in the face of attempts to discover a noble past in Africa. Indeed, to present data simply at a descriptive level tends only to reinforce ethnocentric biases and stereotypes about Africa: primitiveness and savagery.

Another way to study Africa's indigenous religions is to organize the study around certain presumed needs of mankind. Students could, for example, compare traditional African religions and Western answers to such questions as "Why illness?", "Why death?" or "Why human suffering?" Although this focus may have considerable appeal to high school students, particularly as it deals with religion at an expressive and personal - even exotic - level, there seem to be several difficulties implicit in such an approach. It may be quite difficult, for example, to develop greater knowledge about African religion - that is an ability to judge the applicability of such practices in an African context - in this fashion. There are at least two possible reasons for this inadequacy.

First of all, organized religion <u>everywhere</u> engages in promoting ethnocentrism. Thus, to the extent that students are themselves religious, it seems inevitable that the reaction to <u>African</u> religions will be, if not outright hostility, then at least a superficial tolerance. Furthermore, should one assume, after considerable research, that students share a more secular, rational outlook on human experience, then they may indeed reject <u>a priori</u> all religious explanations of

man's needs as simply species of intellectual error. In short, dealing with these, the manifest functions of African religion, could produce a head-on confrontation between values basic to both traditional African and contemporary American life. It also appears quite certain that traditional African religion would hardly get a fair "hearing" under these circumstances.

A third approach to the study of traditional African religion is to center the activities on what a religion does for the society in which it is experienced. The focus of such a study might be to discover how religion, as an "organ" of a specific African culture, interacts with other major "organs" or institutions of that culture - how it interacts with the institutions of family and kinship, governing, social control and economic well-being. While this approach offers a way to lessen the interplay of ethnocentric bias in the learning process (and possibly challenge these biases as a result), there are nevertheless several problems connected with its implementation.

It appears that American youth are becoming increasingly secular in their attitude toward life. Thus one difficulty is related to the problems created by ethnocentric bias. High school students may have considerable difficulty in grasping the extent to which African religion pervades every aspect of traditional African life. This difficulty, in turn, suggests another, namely that since "religion" is virtually coterminous with "culture" in traditional African settings, the level of abstraction is often so high that it is difficult for one to work in any coherent way with it. Indeed, since it appears that structure needs explanation prior to the investigation of function, there is a likelihood that all of the major features of an African culture will need to be at least described before studying how the religious experience helps keep such a structure (a people's culture) running smoothly!

Should such a study be organized along inquiry lines, a fourth difficulty arises. Data which is necessary to make inferences or generalize about specific functions of African religion is most scarce. For example, the nearest approximation of religious data in this form is found in Murdock's Ethnographic Atlas but this work does not include data which makes it possible to draw functional inferences from or make such generalizations about traditional African religion.

There is, finally, a fourth alternative approach to studying traditional African religion. This is to simply accept the inevitability of student ethnocentrism and instead employ African religious experiences in such a way as to promote inquiry about religion in the students' own world. Perhaps the data may then be conceptualized as a series of candles which, when lighted, place in relief aspects of religion in our own culture which before had been hidden by its "normality" The ways in which religious affiliation still appear to affect and reveal values and class in the United States is one area which might then be investigated. In this perspective, of course, the level of analysis may be at either the personal and idiosyncratic or the cultural and in each case, only those difficulties not associated with ethnocentrism need be considered by the teacher.

There is yet another problem - in addition to student (and teacher) ethnocentrism - which affects any study of traditional African religion, and especially any study of it based on inquiry-teaching strategies. This problem relates to the degree to which reason can be applied to an understanding of any religious experience tenet or behavior. The religious sphere of human action is fundamentally heterogeneous to the secular aspects of life. Perhaps the problem which results is most clearly demonstrated by one aspect of this heterogeneity: religion everywhere is based upon faith and its purposes and practices do not admit, consequently, of rational analysis. It may thus not be possible to apply the procedures of rational analysis to such a diametrically opposed sphere of human life to derive any valid understanding of that phenomenon.

Introduction to Materials in Traditional African Religion

In spite of the problems implicit in attempting to study about African religion or in attempting to use African religion as a vehicle for gaining insights into the behavior and values of Africans as well as of ourselves, such study can be a rewarding and informative experience. In order to assist teachers in planning such studies, we have prepared the following materials. Reference to them should be useful in designing units of study on traditional African religion organized along the lines of one or more of the approaches suggested above.

PART I Selected Materials on Traditional African Religion

PART II A Teaching Unit on Traditional African Religion

PART I

SELECTED MATERIALS

ON

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

I. SELECTED SOURCES ON TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

A. GENERAL SOURCES

Beier, Veli (ed.). The Origin of Life and Death: African Creation Myths. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1966. 66 pp. Paper.

This is a brief and comparative presentation of traditional African explanations of life and death. Not only revealing the common literary motifs Africans tend to employ in such stories, the selections also demonstrate - with often striking clarity - the resemblances to the Biblical mythology in the Judaic-Christian tradition.

Feldman, Susan (ed.). African Myths and Tales. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1963. 318 pp. Paper.

The editor's introduction to this fine collection of African oral traditions provides an especially clear perspective of the place of oral traditions in the lives and the religions of traditional African cultures.

Herskovits, Melville, J. The Human Factor in Changing Africa. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967. 500 pp. Hardcover.

Anthropologist Herskovits details the various faces of change now in progress in Africa. Although generalizations about change in such a vast area as Africa should be approached with great caution, the author nevertheless has made available a very intelligible explanation of this complex topic. Beginning with a description of the base line for change - essentially rural cultures - Herskovits goes on to describe the impact of Western contact and rapid urbanization on African education, politics, religion and, in general, traditional values. Highly recommended for the newcomers to African traditional life.

Parrinder, Geoffrey. Religion in Africa. Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1969. 253 pp. Paper.

This is a brief but excellent introduction to the general religious experience in Africa - both in the traditional and "modern" settings. The author makes some attempt to present to the reader an analysis of this experience at the level of social organization - that is, the latent function of religion (political sacerdotilization, social controls, et cetera) in addition to his unusually clear explication at the level of individual religious participation. A most useful book for the teacher new to Africa and who may desire an introduction to the African religious experiences.

Turnbull, Colin M. Tradition and Change in African Tribal Life. New York: The World Publishing Co., 1966. 271 pp. Hardcover.

Dr. Turnbull, a noted anthropologist and authority of African cultures, helps to make it possible to see the world through the eyes of members of traditional African cultures. The book is organized around the life cycle of individual Africans - from birth to death - and demonstrates the ways in which traditional values are given to the young and "acted out" by the adult and aged. Perhaps the best quality of this work is its readability - for it should appeal not only to the adult who wishes to know more about African cultures, but also to students at the secondary level.

B. THE RELIGIONS OF SPECIFIC TRADITIONAL CULTURES

The selections briefly annotated below, include a variety of ways of looking at the religious experiences of particular African traditional cultures. Each source, in turn, is more completely annotated in the topics which follow in Section II, part B of this bibliography.

Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1967. 190 pp. Paper.

Things Fall Apart revolves around a proud and sometimes violent Ibo warrior, Okonkwo, who finds it hard to exist at a time when traditional values are gradually fading away. In the end, life becomes too much of a struggle for him and he takes his own life, despite the taboo against suicide in Iboland, Nigeria.

Aluko, T. M. One Man, One Wife. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1969. 201 pp. Paper.

This is a novel set in Yoruba territory in Western Nigeria. It portrays the confrontation between Yoruba values and those of the West (British Colonial Administration).

Bleeker, Sonia. The Ashanti of Ghana. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1966. 160 pp. Hardcover.

In addition to explaining the tribal origins and development of Ashanti civilization, the author makes an attempt to explain Ashanti religion, family, and government organization. Of particular importance is the discussion of the Golden Stool of the Ashanti.

Idowu, E. B. Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966. 222 pp. Hardcover.

An ordained Yoruba minister of the Methodist church presents the most thorough description of traditional Yoruba religion available. His discussion is supported with abundant primary source data - particularly in the form of religious oral traditions which are often translated in full. This work, however, has been challenged by some for its alleged "Christian" point-of-view.

Kenyatta, Jomo. Facing Mt. Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu. New York: Random House, Inc., 1962. 326 pp. Paper.

A Gikuyu himself, author Kenyatta brings to his own culture the trained eye of an anthropologist, and, in so doing, expertly describes the structure of this East African way of life.

Laye, Camara. The Dark Child. New York: Noonday Press, 1954. 188 pp. Hardcover.

Camara Laye artistically recreates the clear memories of an African childhood - a childhood which began in the traditional interior of French West Africa and ended on a plane headed for France.

Munonye, John. The Only Son. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1966. 202 pp. Paper.

This is a novel about Chishu, an Ibo widower who has devoted her entire life to the raising of her only son Nnanna. The tale develops a poignant narrative of a woman whose entire world is gradually destroyed as her son becomes drawn toward Western education and the new ideas imported into the Nigerian state by Western settlers.

Ngugi, James. The River Between. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1965. 175 pp. Paper.

James Ngugi has provided us with a perceptive tale of tradition and change in Gikuyuland, Kenya. Waiyaki, the hero of the novel, represents the classical conception of a marginal man - standing between traditional Gikuyu culture and that of the West as represented by British missionaries in Kenya. Tragedy for Waiyaki follows his attempts to form a cultural bridge between these two worlds.

Selormey, F. The Narrow Path: An African Childhood. New York: Praeger, 1966. 184 pp. Hardcover.

In this provocative story a young boy, Kofi, reflects about life as he grows up on the coast of Ghana - a life that is precariously balanced between the traditional and the new.

Sowande, Fela. Ifa. (a pamphlet published by the author and available by writing him at Howard University, Washington, D.C.) 1964. 74 pp. Paper.

This brief pamphlet makes a case for a different interpretation of Yoruba traditional religion from that explained in Idowu, Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief.

II. SELECTED ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

A. INDEX TO TOPICS AND SOURCES

The Features of Religion

The many features of religion may be categorized in a variety of ways. An attempt has been made here to select and annotate from selected sources representative examples of sacred beliefs, roles, shrines, rituals, objects, and mythical motifs one may find in various African cultures. The numbers listed after each feature refer to alphabetized and numbered titles in Section II, part B of the bibliography.

The Features of Religion

Beliefs: 1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15, 20, 26

Roles: 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 14, 20, 25

Shrines: 1, 4, 21

Rituals: 1, 20, 22, 24, 25

Motifs: 9

Objects: 20

The Functions of Religion

According to the "structure-function" model of culture, common to the disciplines of anthropology and sociology, a people's religion provides sacred support for the secular features of life. This heading includes excerpts illustrative of secular "functions" of religion as it is experienced in traditional African ways of life.

Social Functions

The Life Cycle

Birth: 25, 26
Rites of Passage: 16, 17, 23, 26
Education: 1, 2, 23, 26
Marriage: 25, 26
Old Age: 26
Death: 1

Social Control: 26, 27

The Family: 1, 2, 7, 8, 15, 16, 26, 27

Social Class: 18, 23

Values: 1, 3, 16, 26

Role Models: 1, 13, 23

Economic Functions

1, 4, 16, 23, 25, 26

Political Functions

4, 9, 13, 26

Culture Conflict

Africa, like all areas of the world, has undergone periods of rapid change in recent decades. Among the factors responsible for these changes are rapid urbanization and contact under a variety of conditions with the alien cultures. The following excerpts describe some of the effects on traditional African life and religion which have sometimes followed from these changes.

Culture Conflict

1, 2, 11, 20, 23

Physical Environment

One of the many areas which may be explored to explain a particular religious experience is that of the physical environment - the topography and climate, for example, among which the culture life has evolved. As has been implied above, however, religion is far too complex a human experience to be so "simply" explained. The few selections which follow demonstrate the extent to which such environmental "forces" may influence the religious expression of a people.

The Physical Environment

12, 26

B. SELECTED SOURCES

1. Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1967.

Education	
p. 48	A mother educates her children by telling them stories about her people's past. The tale of "the quarrel between the Earth and Sky" is related in full.
Sacred Beliefs	
pp. 9-11	Fears of the spirit world are explained in this brief passage about traditional Ibo culture.
p. 119	A discussion of personal gods.
Sacred Shrines	
p. 42	Discussion of a "sacred tree."
Economics	
pp. 33-34	The Ibo "Festival of the Yam" is described by the author in this passage.
Conflict	
pp. 130-134	This passage is concerned with describing the African view of the arrival of missionaries in Iboland, Nigeria. As a particularly lucid and humorous account of this event, this passage might prove useful as a springboard to introduce the concept "ethnocentrism."
Ritual	
pp. 15-17	An account of the ritual to be observed when one consults an oracle and a brief description of the reasons one consults such a deity in Iboland, Nigeria.
Family	
pp. 5-6	The relationship of ancestor worship to the day-to-day activities of an Ibo home.
Religious Roles	
pp. 90-98	A description of the power of the Priestess of the oracle over the people in traditional Iboland.
Sacred Beliefs	
p. 25	A brief discussion of beliefs about the character of the guardian spirit - or "chi" - of each Ibo individual.
Social Values	
p. 156	Religious norms against the practice of suicide.
pp. 60-61	Discussion of relationship between demands of oracle and individual freedom between two of the characters in the novel.
Death	
pp. 109-114	A burial ceremony is described here at some length.

Conflict

pp. 135-136 — Leaders of the community meet the threat of Christian missionary expansion by allowing them to build their church on "evil" groung.

pp. 166-172 — The clash between traditional religious beliefs and customs and those of Christianity.

pp. 142-144 — Christian ideas of equalitarianism clash against traditional social/religious distinctions. Also the idea of a totem (in this case, a python) is discussed.

p. 139 — The novelist reveals the personal anguish caused by an errant (westernized) son as his activities affect "the family ancestors."

Family

pp. 26-29 — The annual "Week of Peace" is a religious ceremony during which time no one is to be beaten in a family; no work is done and other day-to-day sorts of activities are suspended - as if society were catching its breath.

Social Roles

pp. 80-84 — The clear implication from this passage about ancestor worship is that women had a special, and subordinate, position in the culture.

2. Aluko, T. M. One Man, One Wife. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1969.

Education

pp. 19-24 — Religious folk tales are employed to teach children the social norms of the group to which they belong. A tale concerning the social expectations surrounding marriage is fully related in these pages.

Conflict

pp. 179-184 — The conflict and resolution which result when Christian beliefs meet traditional Yoruba religious beliefs are highlighted in this passage.

pp. 112-118 — Traditional explanations of disaster are placed against those of the new religion - Christianity. A broad attack on traditional culture is suggested as logically following this "invasion."

pp. 31-32 — Culture conflict follows when people desire to acquire the "white man's magic" (education).

Religious Roles

pp. 144-146 — A Yoruba priest of the "old" religion prophesizes that the cause of a current smallpox epidemic is the presence of a Christian missionary in the area. "Prophecy" as here described seems similar to the self-fulfilling prophesy offered by sociologists.

Family
pp. 107-108 — A specific example of a way in which a parent impresses upon a child the "reality" of ancestors in everyday life; there is also described one of the functions of ancestor worship in the raising of a child.

3. Beier, Ulli (trans.). "Hunger." in Hughes, Langston (ed.). Poems from Black Africa. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1963.

Social Values — Ulli Beier, a specialist in Yoruba language, translates for the reader a brief bit of folk wisdom passed down orally through time in Yorubaland, Nigeria. It concludes that "There is no God like one's throat. We have to sacrifice daily to it."

4. Bleeker, Sonia. The Ashanti of Ghana.

Economics
pp. 17-18 — Ashanti belief in and sacrifice to spirits of Lake Bosumtivi.

Political
p. 29 — Bowdich, an early European explorer describes the Golden Stool of the Ashanti and the beliefs associated with this tribal fetish.

Chapter 3 — Discussion of Golden Stool of Ashanti.

pp. 51-53 — The political function of the Golden Stool of the Ashanti is briefly discussed in this passage.

Sacred Roles
p. 39: p. 43 — A discussion of beliefs about Ashanti drummers and the making of a drum.

Sacred Shrines
pp. 48-49 — This brief passage describes the sacred grove of the Ashanti where eight pots were buried in commemmoration of the first eight male ancestors. It is located in Kumasi.

Sacred Beliefs
p. 49 — Nyankopou, the supreme deity of the Ashanti, is "the Sky God." No image is ever made of Him, although images of the lesser deities sometimes appear. There are many lesser deities - their spir ; are located all over the physical world which surrounds men.

5. Chemba, Y. S. "Argument with God." in Okola, L. (ed.). Drum Beat. Nairobi, Kenya: The East African Publishing House, 1967.

Sacred Beliefs
pp. 28-30 — In this poem we have a very contemporary and effective treatment of the relationship between God and the death of a child. Mr. Chemba is a writer and poet who is from Uganda in East Africa.

6. Couton, William. "The Blood in the Washbasin." in Komey, E.A. and E. Mphahlele (ed's.). Modern African Studies. London: Faber, 1966.

Sacred Beliefs
pp. 60-67 — This is a short story which depicts the power of a "curse" upon a highly Westernized African.

7. Cudjoe, S. D. "Reincarnation." in Reed, J. and C. Wake (ed's.). A Book of African Verse. Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1967.

Family
p. 19 — A brief poem leaving the reader with a glimpse of the depth of feeling associated with ancestor worship in Africa.

8. Diop, Birago. "Viaticum" and "Breath." in Reed, J. and C. Wake (ed's) A Book of African Verse. Heinemann Educational Books. Ltd., 1967.

Family
pp. 23-25 — Two brief poems by this Senegalise author, in which the reader vicariously experiences the profound "closeness" of the ancestors to a traditional African family experience.

9. Feldman, Susan (ed.). African Myths and Tales. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1963.

Motifs
pp. 112-113 — Three variations of the "sleep test" motif commonly found in African religious myths are related (Lunda, Ngala, and Luba cultures). Each myth is concerned with an explanation of the origin of death.

Political
p. 22 — The author's introduction generalizes about the relationship between a developed polytheism and an elaborately hierarchical organization of the state.

10. Gelfand, Michael. "On the Rounds with a Witch Doctor." in The New York Times Magazine, March 14, 1965. p. 44.

Sacred Roles — The article reveals the day-to-day activities of a modern-day witch doctor at work in Rhodesia.

11. Herskovits, Melville J. The Human Factor in Changing Africa. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967.

Sacred Beliefs
pp. 295-296 — Belief in magic and the efficacy of traditional medicines is described here as "one of the most persistently and widespread traditions in the African urban scene."

Conflict
p. 211 — An anthropologist (Bascom) discusses the effect of the "...wholesale rejection of all African belief as worthless... [which] weaken[ed] the moral foundations on which African social structure was reared." Particularly deplored here was the missionary opposition to the swearing of oaths, which constituted a central feature of societal control among the Anang people of south-eastern Nigeria.

12. _____. "Jesus of Ibodan." in African Drum, February, 1969.

Sacred Roles — An unsympathetic African view of the arrival of a modern-day Nigerian prophet.

13. Johnson, Samuel. The History of the Yorubas. London: Rontledge, 1921. 684 pp. Hardcover.

Political
pp. 41 - Johnson describes the religious ritual connected with the selection and coronation of the Alafin - the Yoruba King of Oyo and supreme ruler of the Yoruba people.

Social Roles
p. 36 The author cites the oral tradition about Oya, one of the deity Shango's wives. Perhaps an example of the "idealized" female role in Yoruba culture.

14. Kayira, L. The Looming Shadow. New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1967.

Sacred Roles
pp. 11-23 Natural events (an eclipse) are associated with witchcraft, as is illness according to this excerpt from Kayira's novel.

Sacred Beliefs
pp. 24-37; 39-40; and 44-142 A quarrel between two men becomes enlarged into a charge of witchcraft. An interesting discussion of how such a charge might logically come about in traditional Africa.

15. Kenyatta, Jomo. Facing Mt. Kenya. New York: Random House, 1962.

Sacred Beliefs
pp. 222-227 The qualities ascribed to Ngai, the supreme deity of the Gikuyu people of Kenya are explained by this famous anthropologist-politician.

pp. 250-253 Gikuyu religious beliefs concerning illness and epidemic. The ritual traditionally observed to drive away "evil spirits" is here described at some length.

Family
pp. 253-258 The specific ways in which ancestor worship tends to support the existing Gikuyu social structure is explained in this section of Kenyatta's work. Described in some detail are the rituals which accompany family feasting.

pp. 223-224 The author delineates between Gikuyu worship of Ngai and worship of the ancestors.

16. Laya, Camara. The African Child. London: Fontana Books, 1955.

Rite of Passage
Chapter 8 (pp. 92-113) This entire section relates the ceremonies which precede and accompany circumcision - and which enlarge the meaning of the simple act itself into a significant rite of passage for those who experience it.

pp. 73-80 Joining the "society of the uninitiated" (uncircumcized youth).

pp. 92-113 (Chapter VIII) — The entire chapter relates the ceremonies which precede and accompany circumcision in a traditional African culture.

Family

pp. 15-21 — A snake is the "guiding spirit" of our family and race, explains a father to his small son.

pp. 58-62 — Family totems are discussed - but the passage especially details the "special powers" of a mother in the wondering eyes of her child.

pp. 114-115 — One sees the ceremonies surrounding the preparations for leaving home to attend a boarding school.

Economics

pp. 23-32 — The religious aspects of gold working.

Values

pp. 125-126 — Mohammedan beliefs are made evident as revealed in the daily life and personal character of one individual.

17. Laye, Camara. "The Night of the Lions." in Nolen, B. (ed.). Africa is People. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1967.

Rite of Passage

pp. 3-13 — In this section, the author relates his autobiographical account of the ceremonies marking the stage in his life when he was to join the mysterious "society of the uninitiated."

18. Lystad, Robert A. "The American and the African: A Comparison of Images." in Background Book, Africa and the United States: Images and Realities. Boston, Mass.: UNESCO, 1969.

Social Values — A highly useful comparison of basic value premises in Africa and the United States. Especially reveals the significantly greater religious orientation of Africans when compared to people in the United States.

19. Mbiti, John. "Kenya Our Motherland." in Okala, L. (ed.). Drum Beat. Nairobi, Kenya: The East African Publishing House, 1967.

Environment

pp. 77-78 — A poetic expression of the presumed relationship between the features of the land and Gikuyu beliefs about Ngai - their supreme deity.

20. Munonye, John. The Only Son. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1966.

Sacred Roles

pp. 137-143 — The author relates his fictional account of the ritual which accompanies the exorcism of disease - either of the mind or of the spirit - by an African Priest-Doctor.

pp. 117-118 — An African priest-doctor prescribes for an illness; the beliefs which surround the priestly role and which impart efficacy to these prescriptions are here described and explained.

Sacred Objects
pp. 102-103 — Beliefs in charms.

Conflict
pp. 73-77 — An African convert to Christianity confronts, and degrades, traditional religious beliefs and customs in his attempt to gain more Christian converts.

Sacred Beliefs
p. 4 — A smallpox epidemic is in progress and traditional beliefs about this disease are made evident in this brief passage.

p. 30 — An individual discusses her "chi," or guardian spirit.

Sacred Ritual
p. 38 — A brief passage disclosing the practice of the exorcism of malevolent spirits.

21. Mutiga, Joe G. "To a Sacred Grove." in Okola, L. (ed.), Drum Beat. Nairobi, Kenya: The East African Publishing House, 1967.

Sacred Shrines
pp. 92-93 — A poem which attempts to give the reader the feelings associated with the sacred Gikuyu groves dedicated to Ngai.

22. Nettl, Bruno. Music in Primitive Culture. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956.

Sacred Ritual
pp. 6-7; 19 — The religious aspects of African music.

23. Ngugi, James. The River Between. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1965.

Education
Chapters 4-5 (pp. 16-24) — In these chapters, Waiyaki, the hero of the narrative, is taught the ways of the Gikuyu tribe by his father, Chege. Discussed in these chapters are the Sacred Grove; the legend of male supremacy; legends of Gikuyu and Mumbi - the Father and Mother of Gikuyus; legend of the witch doctor who prophesized Gikuyu future.

Rites of Passage
pp. 52-55 — The circumcision rite as it is experienced in Gikuyuland.

pp. 13-15 — Preparations for the circumcision rite of passage in Gikuyuland is preceded by a "second birth." The ritual practices of this event are described.

Conflict
pp. 26-31; 44-47; 63-65 — Trouble results in a family when Christians label circumcision as "barbaric" although as a rite of passage it is central to traditional Gikuyu culture.

p. 79 — The conflict between the new Christian education in schools and the "old" Gikuyu social structure is highlighted - especially mentioned is the attack on circumcision, a rite central to Gikuyu culture.

pp. 35-36 — The white (and Christian) vs. the African frame-of-reference is represented in the thoughts of a converted gikuyu Christian and minister.

Social Class
pp. 7-9 — The social status of Gikuyu religious elders is described.

Economics
pp. 2-4 — The Gikuyu myth which ties together the land, people, and their religion is described in this passage. The coming of the white man is also prophecized here.

Social Roles
p. 12 — Gikuyu myth - giants of the tribe of the distant past - serve as role models for Gikuyu youth.

24. Ogot, Grace A. "The Rain Came." in Komey, E. A. and E. Mphahlele (ed's.). Modern African Studies. London: Faber, 1966.

Sacred Ritual — A brief but poignant story revealing the rationale by which human beings were sometimes sacrificed to the duties in Luo culture in East Africa.

25. Selormey, F. The Narrow Path, An African Childhood. New York: F. A. Praeger, 1966.

Marriage
pp. 3-5 — Traditions are broken as two young Africans enter into marriage in an unconventional manner ("boy-meets-girl") and the marriage takes place in a Roman Catholic Church. Religious aspects are not discussed - it is implied that whatever they may be, these are simply ignored by the couple.

Birth
pp. 32-39 — The religious aspects of human birth - especially as it concerns ancestor worship.

Economics
pp. 6-7 — Religion is invoked to ensure a successful fishing season.

Sacred Roles
pp. 12-14 — An African priest "brings back to life" a young child hovering near death.

Sacred Ritual
pp. 71-74 — This passage discusses the purification ceremonies a young boy undergoes in traditional approaches to illness in his family.

Sacred Roles
Chapter 10 (pp. 89-97) — An excellent passage which reveals to the reader traditional Ghanaian attituded towards witchcraft and "proven" witches.

26. Turnbull, Colin M. Tradition and Change in African Tribal Life. New York: The World Publishing Co., 1966.

Education
pp. 57-88 — While little attention is given in this passage about the relationship of religion to education in African traditional culture, it is included in this annotation as an excellent "general" description of traditional education in Africa.

Marriage
pp. 139-154 — A general section relating comparative marriage practices among African cultures with occasional references to the religious aspects of marriage.

Family
p. 39 — A brief description (1 paragraph) which describes the general function of the African family in traditional culutras.

Birth
pp. 48-57 — Turnbull generalizes about the rituals associated with human birth in African cultures and specifically compares naming practices among the Yoruba, Masai, Bushmen and Ba Ganda.

pp. 70-72 — Birth rituals followed by Mbuti (Pygmy) people are related.

Rites of Passage
pp. 99-118 — Turnbull generalizes about traditions of initiation and circumcision - being "reborn" - in comparative African cultures (Ba Mbuti, Masai, Bushmen, Ba Bira).

Old Age
pp. 155-210 — Turnbull discusses the role of the elders - religious and secular - in traditional African cultures.

Social Values
pp. 253-260 — Effect of intrusion of Western customs and law on traditional African beliefs and behavior described.

Environment
pp. 65-67 — The close relationships between the forest, the economic way of life and Mbuti (Pygmy) religion is compared with the attitude of non-forest people toward the forest - (as something evil).

Economics
pp. 90-93 — The religious aspects of the "smithy" role is compared among African cultures (Ba Bira and Masai).

Political
pp. 170-173 — The way in which religion sacerdotalizes political institutions in African cultures is explored in this excerpt. The example used here is the divine kingship concept as represented by the Ashanti people of Ghana.

Sacred Beliefs
p. 188 — The pervasiveness of traditional African beliefs about "power" is discussed in this brief excerpt.

Social Control
pp. 158-163 — The religious functions of the control of social behavior - deviance - are here explained. Included among these means, it is explained, are divinations and masks.

27. Turnbull, Colin M. "The Way of the Ancestors." in Nolen, B. (ed.). Africa is People. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1967.

Family
pp. 67-68 — A brief but lucid explanation of the number of points at which ancestor worship touches upon the lives of traditional Africans.

Social Control
pp. 69-74 — An excellent section in which divination and other African methods of handling social deviation is made understandable for the Western reader.

PART II

A TEACHING UNIT

ON

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

INTRODUCTION TO TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

The language we use is not neutral. When students use "religion," for example, they <u>mean</u> very specific and culture-bound "things" - Sunday school, ministers, Bar Mitzvah, nuns, crucifixes, cathedrals, and sermons, among others. The primary objective of this unit is to <u>expand</u> this rather narrow concept of religion through an inquiry into traditional African religions - chiefly that of the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria. This unit will require students to identify the features of religion as they have experienced it in their own culture and to apply these features to the study of traditional African experience. The unit is also designed to encourage students to make further, more detailed inquiry into the nature of religion - how, for example, a religion may or may not help pull together the various parts of a culture into a smoothly functioning whole.

The major objectives of this unit are:

1. To know basic features of traditional African religion
2. To develop a more inclusive, less culture-bound concept of religion
3. To stimulate a more detailed inquiry into how a religion functions in society
4. To develop and refine the skills of intellectual inquiry.

Activity	Purpose	Materials
1	To distinguish between the sacred and the secular in everyday life	Picture cards
2	To classify religion into specific features and to test the classification against traditional African religious experiences	Picture cards Readings
3	To introduce students to the wide spectrum of religious behavior in Africa and to motivate students to further inquiry about African religion	Slide-tape
4	To develop hypotheses about traditional Yoruba religion	Evidence cards
5	To develop conclusions about the nature of Yoruba religion and to apply these conclusions to new data	Readings
6	To develop criteria for the analysis of written materials and to introduce students to the relationship of religious data to historical investigation	Reading

Activity	Purpose	Materials
7	To make inferences from religious data about Yoruba history and To test hypotheses against more data	Taped oral traditions List of Yoruba kings Written traditions
8	To develop a conclusion about the relationship of religious traditions to history	Hand-out Reading Definition
9	To develop conclusions about the nature of religion	

ACTIVITY 1

A) Introduction: This activity is concerned with motivating students to inquire about the nature of religious experiences. It is especially designed to assist students to develop criteria for distinguishing between aspects of the social world which are sacred (religious) and those which are secular (non-religious).

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To introduce students to a study of religion in society.

To develop skills in making inferences from data taken from the social world.

To arrange data into sacred and secular categories.

B) Materials: 5 sets of picture-cards
5 large manila envelopes
1 teacher tally sheet
5 student tally sheets

C) Teaching Strategy:

1) Ask: WHAT IS RELIGION? Make a list on the board of the various features of religion suggested by students. As you do so, distinguish between the various parts of religion and the feelings which may be expressed about the worth of religion.	"Religion is...." For example, students may say religion is made up of: church Sunday School ministers God Other comments may be evaluative, as: "Behind the times." "Needed more than ever." ...
2) a) Divide the class into 5 groups. Distribute one set of picture cards to each group and one student tally sheet. Suggest that each group appoint one member to keep a record of each group's activities. b) Direct the groups to divide the cards into two piles: one which represents religion and one for cards which appear unrelated to religion.	

3) Have the group recorders report. For each card, ask: HOW MANY PLACED THIS CARD IN THE RELIGIOUS PILE? Count the hands of the student-recorders and record the numbers in the appropriate spaces on your tally sheet. Continue until all cards have been satisfactorily tallied in this manner.

4)

a) Tell the groups we will accept any 4-1 difference in classifying the pictures as "virtual" agreement and will consider only those 3-2, 2-3 combinations as constituting disagreement between the groups.

b) Select one of the picture-cards over which there was disagreement. Find a group which placed it in the religious category and ask: WHY DID YOU SEE THIS AS RELIGIOUS? Encourage other groups to question the religious criteria which emerge and to offer their own criteria. Continue this until all picture-cards which evoked a difference of opinion have been satisfactorily discussed.

5) Make a list of the reasons which distinguish the religious from the non-religious in social life on the board as they are discussed.

A typical list might include
"religiousness"
Less common and everyday
Having to do with supernatural
Having feelings of awe
...

6) Ask: WHAT IS RELIGION? Have the students enter this statement in their notebooks.

"Religion is...."

7) Tell the groups that we will continue this activity tomorrow. Allow the groups time to consider the previous discussion and to derive one final set of cards which they can agree to be religious. Distribute the large manila envelopes. As you do so, tell the groups to clearly identify each envelope as yours and place your religious set of cards in these envelopes.

8) Collect the non-religious set of picture cards and the envelopes containing the religious set of cards.

TEACHER TALLY SHEET - Activity 1

Religious	Card	Non-religious
_____	(#1)	_____
_____	(#2)	_____
_____	(#3)	_____
_____	(#4)	_____
_____	(#5)	_____
_____	(#6)	_____
_____	(#7)	_____
_____	(#8)	_____
_____	(#9)	_____
_____	(#10)	_____
_____	(#11)	_____
_____	(#12)	_____
_____	(#13)	_____
_____	(#14)	_____
_____	(#15)	_____

Picture Cards - Activity 1

1. Priest leading protest rally
2. "Hippy" wearing wooden cross
3. Football players praying in locker room
4. Store-front church
5. Religious graffitti on wall
6. "Jesus Saves" neon sign
7. Black minister preaching sermon
8. A crowd of people
9. Hands, in attitude of prayer
10. Biblical scene from Sistine Chapel
11. Crucifix in church altar
12. Religious statue on dashboard of car
13. Handshake
14. Statue of John Kennedy
15. Pastoral scene

STUDENT TALLY SHEET - Activity 1

To the group recorder:

When your group has finished sorting the picture-cards into the two piles, write the <u>numbers</u> of each card in each pile in the corresponding squares, below. You will find the numbers on the back of each card.

When all of the groups report how <u>they</u> sorted the cards, keep a tally (score) of the number of times each card is placed into each category.

Religious

Non-religious

R	Card #	NR
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	
	9	
	10	
	11	
	12	
	13	
	14	
	15	

ACTIVITY 2

A) Introduction: Activity two is a continuation of activity one and is especially concerned with having students classify the religious experience into a number of parts or into features of religion.

The specific objectives are:

To note similarities and differences among data.

To arrange data into categories which are at once comprehensive yet clearly defined.

To generalize about religion.

To test a generalization against additional data.

To collect data from readings.

B) Materials: 5 sets of picture cards in envelopes
Readings "Three Religious Experiences"
Data record sheet
Study Guide

C) Teaching Strategy

1) Ask: WHAT IS THE HYPOTHESIS WE ARE LOOKING AT? Have students refer to their notebooks and the statement last recorded there. Write this on the board.	"Religion is...."
2) Arrange the class into the same groups as in Activity one. Distribute the envelopes containing their set of religious cards. Direct the groups to <u>divide this set of cards into further categories which represent the various features of religion</u>.	
3) a) Have the groups report the <u>numbers</u> of the cards in each of the separate categories they have identified. Write these numbers on the board.	

b) Ask: HOW CAN WE GROUP THESE NUMBERS SO THAT WE HAVE ONE SET OF RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES? Have the students derive one classification scheme by grouping similarities and differences in the lists on the board.

4) Have the groups identify the name of each category. Tell them to refer to the picture cards listed on the board and ask: WHAT NAME SHALL WE ASSIGN TO THIS CATEGORY OF RELIGION? Repeat this procedure until each category of cards has been satisfactorily assigned a name.

A typical classification may be:

Rituals
Beliefs
Places of worship
Symbols
...

5) Direct the students' attention to the earlier hypotheses about religion. Ask: HOW HAS OUR DEFINITION OF RELIGION CHANGED? Have students enter their new definitions into their notebooks. They will serve as hypotheses to test against the reading assigned for tonight.

6) Collect the picture-cards from each group.

7) Tell the students that tonight's reading assignment will provide an opportunity to check our definition of religion against some additional data. Complete the study guide for tomorrow. List the features or main categories of religion arrived at today on the study guide. Read pp. 1-5 in the Student Readings.

STUDY GUIDE
Activity 2

As you read the three case studies on pp. of your booklet, look for examples of the features of religion derived in class today. Beside each feature listed, write a few words to describe the <u>specific</u> part of each group's religion which illustrates that feature. List, below, those experiences which <u>do</u> <u>not</u> fit any of our classification

DATA RECORD SHEET

Religious Feature	Kikuyu	Mbuti	Yoruba
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

ACTIVITY 3

A) Introduction: Activity three is a brief introduction to the broad sweep of the religious experience in Africa. It is especially designed to encourage students to raise questions about African religion - which we will try to answer in the subsequent activities.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To know that the people of Africa south of the Sahara have a variety of religious experiences.

To test an hypothesis against new data.

To motivate students to further inquiry about African religions.

B) Materials: Slide-tape: "The African Religious Experience."

C) Teaching Strategy:

1) Ask: HOW DID OUR DEFINITION OF RELIGION HOLD UP AFTER LAST NIGHT'S READING? Have students refer to specific features in the readings which seemed to support their definition.

2) Ask: WHAT NEW FEATURES OF RELIGION DID YOU DISCOVER? Have students record any new characteristics of religion on their data record sheets along with the specific examples cited from the readings.

3) Tell the students we are going to see a slide-tape which is concerned with the African religious experience. As you view it, look for examples of African religions which correspond with our definition.

4) Show the slide-tape.

5)
   a) Ask: WHAT FEATURES OF RELIGION IN AFRICA DID YOU NOTE?

   b) Ask: WHAT QUESTIONS OCCURRED TO YOU ABOUT AFRICAN RELIGION AS YOU SAW AND HEARD THE SLIDE-TAPE?

6) Tell the class that we will look more closely at one African religion to see if we can answer some of these questions.

"Religion is...."

RELIGION IN AFRICA

(Slide-tape - Activity 3)

1. Ancestor cult mask (Yoruba, Dahomey)
2. Female-ancestor mask (Mpongwe, Congo)
3. Mythical Buck (Bambara, Mali)
4. Evil spirit mask (Maconde, Mozambique)
5. Mask of Paro society (Sierra Leone)
6. Bronze figure of Olokun or Sea God (Yoruba, Dahomey)
7. Ancestor effigy (Congo)
8. Clay sculpture of Goddess Ala (Ibo, Nigeria)
9. Mask of Ekpo society (Ikoi, Nigeria)
10. Temple to Shango, God of storms (Yoruba, Dahomey)
11. Mt. Kenya, residence of God (Kikuyu, Kenya)
12. Muslim Mosque (Kano, Nigeria)
13. Forest scene (Mbuti, Congo)
14. Muslim Mosque (Nairobi, Kenya)
15. Myths, from door on royal palace (Yoruba, Nigeria)
16. Wood panel, Nigerian myth (Yoruba)
17. Mythical figures on wooden bowl (Yoruba, Nigeria)
18. Muslim Muezzin calling the faithful to prayer (Hausa, Nigeria)
19. Witch doctor
20. Fetish priest (Ashanti, Ghana)
21. Babalawo (Priest) (Yoruba, Nigeria)
22. Kuduo ceremonial box (Ashanti, Ghana)
23. Sacred Stool (Ashanti, Ghana)
24. Koran
25. Sacred headdress of King (Yoruba, Dahomey)
26. Muslims at prayer (Kano, Nigeria)
27. Divining tablets (Bushmen)
28. Symbolic ritual sword (Ashanti, Ghana)
29. Ritual dance
30. Shango thunderax (Yoruba, Nigeria)
31. Picture cloth, rituals to expel evil spirits (Yoruba, Dahomey)
32. !Kung witch doctor ritual (Bushmen)
33. Kall'u ceremony (Mech'a Galla)
34. Kindu temple (Kampola, Uganda)
35. Coptic church (Ethiopia)
36. Coptic priest (Ethiopia)
37. Religious treasures (Ethiopia)
38. Church carved from rock (Lalibella, Ethiopia)
39. Burial ground
40. Shango thunderstone

Sound: Missa Luba : "Kyrie Eleison"

ACTIVITY 4

A) Introduction: Activity four introduces students to the in-depth study of the religion of the Yoruba people of Nigeria. Its purpose is to expand student knowledge of religion at a descriptive level only. It is also designed to introduce students to some of the varieties of evidence social scientists use other than written sources.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To have students work together cooperatively in a group.

To hypothesize about Yoruba religion.

To collect data from definitions, oral traditions, and sayings.

To test hypotheses against data.

B) Materials: 2 sets of evidence cards

C) Teaching Strategy:

---

1) Ask: WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YORUBA RELIGION SO FAR? Direct students to refer to the data collected from the readings and to report the data found there. Tell students to fill in their individual data record sheets with any information they might have missed.

Students should have collected the following data:

They have gods, priests, rituals, songs, dances, objects, Do's and don'ts (a code).

2) Say: LET'S SEE WHAT ELSE WE CAN FIND OUT.

a) Divide the class into 6 groups. Distribute to each group one set of evidence cards. (Note: 3 groups receive set A; 3 groups receive set B.)

b) Tell the students that each group will have the remainder of the class period to make a list of the features of Yoruba religion which emerge from this data. Each group will report its conclusions tomorrow.

4) At the end of the class period, collect each set of evidence cards.

ORAL TRADITION A-1

Sometime in the past, the divinities made a plot against Olodumarè. The Gods, it appears, did not care for the idea that He was the most powerful of the Gods and that He should have control over all of them. They were really jealous and wished this power for themselves. So, they appeared before Him and insisted that He should step down from His position of authority and let them experiment with the affairs of the earth, without His interference, for a period of sixteen years. Even though Olodumarè knew that they were foolish, He nevertheless agreed to their demands - only He would let them attempt an easier trial than that which they had proposed. Instead of a sixteen year trial, why not try it for sixteen days? To this they all quickly agreed, so certain were they of their collective abilities. Cheerfully, they left the presence of Olodumarè to take up their new responsibilities. No sooner had they left, however, than did Olodumarè switch off the machinery of the universe and brought everything to a standstill. Before eight days had passed, the divinities had discovered themselves to be in deep trouble and were faced with a situation of total confusion. Although they devised every means they could think of to keep things going, they repeatedly failed. The heavens withheld

DEFINITION A-2

OL-ODU = Someone who is the supreme being; one who possesses the sceptre of authority; one who is superlative in greatness, size, quality, and worth.

MARÈ = The qualities of stability, permanency and reliability.

Source: Adapted from Idowu. Olodumare. pp. 33-35.

ORAL TRADITION A-3

The earth was once a watery and marshy waste without solid ground. Up above was the sky heaven, the home of Olodumarè with the other divinities and other beings. This watery waste was their sporting ground, down to which they often descended, by means of spider webs, in order to hunt and play.

No one knows why Olodumarè decided to create a solid earth. Apparently, one day, He simply called for a divine agent - Orisa-Nla, or "Great God," and charged him to get the job done. Olodumarè gave him a snail shell filled with loose soil, a five-toed hen, a pigeon and sent him below.

Orisa-Nla came down to the watery waste, threw the loose soil on a suitable site, and let the pigeon and the hen loose to scatter this soil about until the earth was formed. When enough of the marsh had been covered, Orisa-Nla went back and reported to Olodumare that the work had been accomplished. Olodumarè sent out the chameleon to go down and inspect what had been done. From the first visit, the chameleon took back the report that although the earth was indeed wide enough, it was not yet sufficiently dry for further work. After the second visit, however, the chameleon was able to report that everything was just as it should be. The sacred spot where the work by Orisa-Nla began

rain; rivers ceased to flow, yams sprouted but did not develop; ears of corn filled out but did not ripen, and the daily feasting in the houses of the Gods ceased. Surely, the earth was about to perish! At their wits end, the Gods had only one course left open to them - go back and admit defeat to Olodumarè. So, in shame, with heads drooping, they returned to him and confessed their folly. They also acknowledged his absolute sovereignty and supremacy overall, and they pleaded for His mercy. The benevolent Father laughed at their foolishness and forgave them. Then He switched on again the machinery of the universe and it immediately resumed running. The divinities went away singing.

Source: Adapted from E. Bolaji (Idowu), Olodumarè: God in Yoruba Belief. London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1962. pp. 54-55.

was named "Ifè - That which is wide" and that is how IFÈ, the holy city of the Yoruba people, got its name.

The creation of the earth was completed in four days; the fifth day was set apart for the worship of the Deity and for rest. When Olodumarè was satisfied that the work had indeed been done, He sent Orisa-Nla back to equip and embellish the earth. This time, He sent Orunmila to accompany Him and to be His counselor. Olodumarè gave Orisa-Nla the palm tree to plant for its juice would give drink and its seed would give oil as well as food. He gave him also three other trees which were full of sap. These were: the Rubber tree, the Whitewood, the Dodo. This were also to be planted and cultivated as their juices would also give drink. The original hen and pigeon which had been used in spreading the loose earth should now increase and miltiply and provide meat for the dwellers of the earth.

Source: Adapted from Idowu. Olodumarè. pp. 19-20.

YORUBA SAYING A-4

"Only Olorun is Wise."

Source: Idowu. Olodumarè. p. 41.

ORAL TRADITION A-5

One day, Olodumarè Himself was very perplexed over a very important matter. All of the other divinities tried but failed to tell Him the reason for His perplexity. Only Orunmila succeeded in putting his finger on the source of the trouble, and that was that Olodumarè needed on earth someone who should act as His deputy - to whom the other divinities and men could turn for counsel and guidance. There and then, Olodumarè appointed Orunmila to be the deputy and since then he has been the great consultant for all on earth.

Source: Idowu. Olodumarè. p. 77.

YORUBA PRAYER A-6

"L'oju Olodumarè!; L'oju Olofin!; L'oju Oloruni"

(In the presence of Olodumarè! In the presence of Olofin! In the presence of Oloruni)

Source: Idowu. Olodumarè. p. 37.

YORUBA SAYING A-7

"It is Olorun, the King, who pours down the rain in regular flow."

Source: Idowu. Olodumarè. p. 39.

YORUBA SAYING A-8

"Easy to do that which Olodumarè performs; difficult to do that which Olorun enables not."

Source: Idowu. Olodumarè. p. 41.

ORAL TRADITION A-9

"The Head should be accorded His due"
This is the oracle's charge to the one thousand,
seven-hundred divinities
Who must render annual tribute to Olodumarè.

Source: Sacred Traditions (Odu Corpus) at Ife.
Idowu. Olodumarè. p. 55.

YORUBA PRAYER

B-1

"L'oju Olodumarè! ; L'oju Olofin! ; L'oju Oloru!"

(In the presence of Olodumarè! In the presence of Olofin! In the presence of Oloru!)

Source: Idowu, E. Bolaji. Olodumarè: God in Yoruba Belief. London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1962. p. 37.

ORAL TRADITION

B-2

Olodumarè and Orunmila were out walking one day. They suddenly fell into a deep pit, from which, try as they would, they could not get out. They were there for days, until the monkey (Edun) happened to discover them there. He went and collected some fruits which he threw to them. They ate, regained sufficient strength to climb out. But, they were both still so shaken by their experience that they went and shut themselves up in heaven and no one could get them to come out. Edun, however, threatened to spill the beans about the discomfiture he had found them in and they then hastily emerged from their hiding place."

Source: Babalawo (Priest) recitation at Ifè, Oracle of Divination, in Nigeria. From Sowande. "IFA." pp. 34-35.

ORAL TRADITION

B-3

"Olodumarè was in dire straights; Orunmila was in dire straights; Olodumarè told Orunmila to offer sacrifice; Orunmila said that Olodumarè too should sacrifice; each divined for the other; each sacrificed."

Source: Odu Corpus at Ife. From Sowande. "IFA." p. 34.

DEFINITION B-4

OLORUN = The owner of Heaven; the master of the masters of the sacred mysteries of heaven.

Source: Sowande, Fela. "IFA," a pamphlet by Fela Sownade, July, 1964. p. 27.

DEFINITION B-5

OL' ODU-OMO-ARÈ = The vast and mighty being, without father, without mother, self-existent, self-born.

Source: Sowande. "IFA." p. 28.

DEFINITION B-6

ELEDA = "Creator"

Source: Sowande. "IFA." p. 29.

The oracle was consulted on behalf of the 16 major deities as to when they were due to come down to earth. They inquired as to whether they would be able to stay on earth. They were told to offer sacrifice. Eji-Ogbe was the only one who did as he was instructed. Ofun-meji was the first of the deities to be sent down to the earth. He returned to heaven to report that it was impossible to stay on earth, for it was all dark and one vast mass of water. Then, Olodumare gave Eji-Ogbe authority to set things right on earth. Eji-Ogba and his followers arrived on earth and the very first thing that he did was to command that there be light, and there was light. He then commanded that the water be divided into two - for one part to go upwards and the other half to go downwards and that the sky become visible. He also commanded the water on the ground to let dry land appear. When dry land began to appear, grass also began to grow and all kinds of animals began to make their appearances according to the commands of Eji-Ogbe. Ofun-Meji had fully expected Eji-Ogbe to return to heaven with the mission unaccomplished, but as time went on, and he did not hear nor see anything of Eji-Ogbe, he thought he would go down and see what was happening. When he arrived on earth, he found Eji-Ogbe and his

followers comfortably seated. He then ordered Eji-Ogbe to get up so that he, Ofun-Meji, the senior, could sit down, but Eji-Ogbe answered him not a word. Thus, Eji-Ogbe became the most senior of the 16 major deities and Ofun-Meji became the least in order of seniority.

Source: Adapted from Sowande. "IFA". pp. 39-40.

ACTIVITY 5

A) Introduction: This activity is a continuation of the previous activity. It is designed to help students conclude their description of Yoruba religion. It is also intended to suggest that there are a great deal of conflicting beliefs in Yoruba religion.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To analyze and note similarities and differences among the data.

To evaluate evidence.

To conclude.

To test conclusions against other conclusions.

B) Materials: Readings: "Three Interpretations of Yoruba Religion."
Study Guide

C) Teaching Strategy:

1) Arrange students into the groups they were in during the previous activity. Distribute to each group the same set of evidence cards with which they were working yesterday.	
2)	
a) Have each group report the other features of Yoruba religion which emerged after they examined the data on the cards. Ask the other groups to comment by either adding or subtracting features to the reports.	"Yoruba religion is...."
b) Ask: WHY DOES ONE GROUP SEE ONE THING AND ONE GROUP ANOTHER?	
(1) Deal first with differences which might have emerged between groups with identical sets of evidence cards.	Students may say: - different emphasis on one piece of evidence over another - Different meanings assigned to same piece of evidence ...

(2) Next discuss the different conclusions which may emerge between groups who considered <u>different</u> sets of evidence.

Students might note that:

- a particular author may be representing just the evidence necessary to support his particular view
- the priests at Ifè may have a stake in promoting Orunmila (the deity of their oracle) over Olodumarè.

3) When all of the evidence has been satisfactorily considered, have the students refer to their data record sheets and ask: HOW HAS OUR DESCRIPTION OF THE FEATURES OF YORUBA RELIGION CHANGED?

4) Direct the students to read the interpretations of Yoruba religion appearing on pp. 6-9 of their booklet and to complete the study guide accompanying these readings.

STUDY GUIDE - Activity 5

1. List at least three (3) aspects of traditional Yoruba religion on which both author A and author B agree.

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

2. List at least three (3) aspects of Yoruba religion about which authors A and B disagree.

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

3. In the spaces provided to the right of your responses to questions #1 and #2, above, indicate whether author C agrees or disagrees with the points made there.

4. Of the three authors, which one appears to support your conclusions about Yoruba religion reached in class today? Why?

ACTIVITY 6

A) Introduction: The purpose of Activity 6 is to develop a conclusion about the nature of Yoruba religion. It is especially designed to have students develop a sensitivity to the conflict between reason and faith as they may be applied to religious experiences.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To develop a conclusion about the nature of Yoruba religion.

To know that religion is an area of human life in which "faith" usually is considered to have primacy over "reason."

To apply criteria to evaluate data.

To extract data from readings.

B) Materials: Study guide - activity 6
Reading

C) Teaching Strategy:

1) Ask: HOW DID DR. FORDE'S DESCRIPTION OF TRADITIONAL YORUBA RELIGION COMPARE WITH THOSE OF THE TWO YORUBA WRITERS?	Students may report: - Closer agreement with Idowu than Sowandè a) On home of supreme deity b) On names of lesser deities c) On character of Supreme deity (i.e. His "oneness") - Agreement with both writers concerning a) The hierarchical arrangement of the Yoruba pantheon b) Significant position of the oracle at Ifè in Yoruba religion - A comparatively different way of looking at a) The particular structure of the heavenly hierarchy b) The entire experience - he was much more dispassionate then they.
2) Ask: HOW CAN WE DECIDE WHICH OF THE FOUR DESCRIPTIONS (consider student description derived in Activity 5 as one to be analyzed) OF YORUBA RELIGION WE HAVE IS RIGHT?	

3) Have the students pair themselves with a neighbor. Assign a different description of Yoruba religion to each group. Direct each group to <u>analyze your respective descriptions</u> and prepare a report of the strengths and weaknesses of the description for the class.

4)

a) Have the pairs report by asking them to <u>relate the strengths and weaknesses of the description which they analyzed</u>.

For example, a pair assigned to analyze Idowu's description of Yoruba religion may list the following:

<u>Strengths</u>
He is a Yoruba
Lives in Nigeria
Has book published on subject
Is highly educated
Uses a variety of evidence

<u>Weaknesses</u>
Source of some evidence unknown
Does not consider <u>all</u> evidence (for example, that employed by Sowandè)
Is a Christian

b) Ask each pair, as they report, to <u>tell the class why they thought a given characteristic was a strength or weakness in the description analyzed</u>.

For example, a pair may report that "being Yoruba" is a strong point in the author's favor. A reason may be "because personal experience helps a writer to understand better." List the reason "personal experience" on the board. Or a pair might say that a weak point is "not reporting the sources of his evidence, because it may be necessary to check for the authenticity of the sources should other evidence be in conflict." List on the board "reported sources."

c) List all of the criteria for evaluating evidence.

A typical list might include:

<u>Criteria for evaluating written sources</u>
Personal involvement
Reliable evidence
Amount of education
Expertise
Acceptance of ideas at large
Objectivity or impersonal attitude

5) Have students apply these criteria to the four descriptions. Ask: WHICH IS RIGHT?

   Have students enter this new information on their data record sheets next to the appropriate features of religion.

6) Direct students to read pp.10-11 in their booklet and to complete the study guide which accompanies the reading for tomorrow.

Students may say:

1. Every man is entitled to see his religion his own way

2. We can see that they agree that Yoruba religion has
   a. very hierarchical organization among deities
   b. a supreme deity who is aloof from affairs of earth
   c. many lesser deities
   d. holy city at Ifè
   e an important "lesser" deity is god of oracle - Orunmila

STUDY GUIDE - Activity 6

A major problem for those who study about Africa has been the absence of written records. This selection represents one person's conclusions about African history in the absence of such records.

1. List two arguments or pieces of evidence which the author uses to support his conclusion about African history.

   a. _____

   b. _____

2. List two examples of the evidence produced by "the efforts of some Negro intellectuals to discover periods of greatness in the African past."

   a. _____

   b. _____

3. Based upon the criteria developed in class today, describe below your assessment of this reading as an accurate summary of African history.

4. What have we learned about Africa so far which would tend to support or refute the two positions on African history cited in the reading?

ACTIVITY 7

A) Introduction: Activity 7 is designed to introduce students to the possible uses of religious oral traditions in the reconstruction of the African past.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To hypothesize about Yoruba history from oral data

To make inferences from data

To check hypotheses against additional data

To analyze data

B) Materials: Tape: Two oral traditions
1. "Human Beings Become Orisas"
2. "Shango"

Readings: List of Yoruba kings
Two oral traditions - Shango

Study Guide

C) Teaching Strategy

1) Ask: DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH LAST NIGHT'S READING? WHY?	Students might question: Whether Africans are "creatures of fear and superstition, helpless in the grip of magic and witchcraft." the assumption that "isolation" necessarily explains the absence of history in Africa - it might also explain our lack of knowledge of African history.
2)a) Tell the students we are going to hear a recording of an oral tradition which we may use to test if this author is right or not.	
b) Play the tradition "Human Beings Become Orisas."	
c) Ask: WHAT DOES THIS TRADITION SAY ABOUT YORUBA HISTORY?	It says that exceptionally "good" Yorubas sometimes are deified and worshipped by the people.
Ask: DO WE HAVE ANYTHING LIKE THIS IN OUR CULTURE?	Students might note that we make "gods" of men also when we make national heroes or make saints of religious martyrs and leaders.

Ask: WHAT CAN WE INFER FROM THIS TRADITION ABOUT THE USE OF ORAL TRADITIONS AS HISTORICAL EVIDENCE?

Students might infer that

the stories told about religious deities may refer to actual people and events in history

religious oral traditions seem reliable, as they are transmitted carefully from speaker to listener (i.e. repeating the same phrases twice as, for example, "Human beings become Orisas! I responded: Human beings become Orisas!...")

3)a) Introduce the Shango tradition by telling students that <u>this tradition will give us an opportunity to test for the inferences we have made about religion and a people's history</u>.

b) Play the tradition "Shango."

c) Ask: WHAT INFERENCES CAN BE DRAWN ABOUT YORUBA HISTORY FROM THIS DATA?

Students might make the following inferences

Yorubas had kings
Yorubas believed in plural marriage (Polygyny)
There was an element of "consent" in political rule
...

4) Tell the class we will check these hypotheses against some additional data tonight. Direct the students to read pp. 12-14 in their booklet and to complete the study guide for tomorrow's activity.

TAPE SCRIPT

I. HUMAN BEINGS BECOME ORISAS

"Orunmila said: Human beings become Orisas! I responded: human beings become Orisas. He said, Oduduwa, that you hear so much of, he was a human being. Because he did good while on earth as a man, he was remembered after his death and worshipped. Orunmila said: human beings become Orisas. I responded: human beings become Orisas. He said Orisa--nla, for example, was a human being, but he was wiser than his fellows and did good on earth. Therefore, he was remembered and worshipped after his death. Therefore, human beings become Orisas, only the wise are worshipped. Human beings become Orisas." (Sowande, Fela, IFA. Pamphlet published by author: Howard University. pp. 43-44.)

II. SHANGO

"Two of Shango's wives were quarrelsome, and there were also a few complaints from the subjects of Shango concerning his tyrannical ways of governing them. Shango became angry with everybody, mounted his horse, and went away into the forest. For a long time, he was expected back, but his people waited in vain. When he did not return, the people feared that he had gone off in a fit of temper to hang himself. So they went in search of him. He was not found, but his horse was. The searcher therefore called out, 'Where are you, O King? Have you hanged yourself?' To which he replied from a long distance, 'No, I have not hanged myself!' 'Then come back to us, we want you,' they called back. But he replied, 'No, since there has been so much trouble in the compound and so many complaints against me from you all, I will not come back to you; I will now rule you unseen.' So he ascended to heaven by a chain which sprang from the Ayan tree. From heaven he has since shown his kingship by lightning and thunder." (Idowu, E. Bolaji, Olodumarè: God in Yoruba Belief. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966.)

STUDY GUIDE - ACTIVITY 7

1. Based upon the data to be found in the "List of Yoruba Kings" -

   (a) Approximately when were the years of King Shango's reign?

   _____

   (b) List two ways in which this data supports or rejects the hypotheses arrived at in class today.

   (1) _____

   (2) _____

2. Compare the two narrative traditions about King Shango, then:

   (a) List two points upon which they both agree.

   (1) _____

   (2) _____

   (b) List at least one point upon which they appear to disagree.

   _____

   _____

3. What seems to be the <u>major</u> difference between these two oral traditions and that heard in class today?

ACTIVITY 8

A) Introduction: Activity 8 begins to conclude this introduction to religion in traditional Africa. It is especially designed to develop conclusions about the application of religious traditions to historical investigation and, in addition, to suggest that religion also may function to support existing political culture.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To know that religious oral traditions may be useful in the reconstruction of traditional African history

To check tentative findings against additional data

To develop a conclusion about the nature of religion.

B) Materials: Student Handout "A Brief History of the Yoruba People"
"Religion: Three Definitions"
Study Guide, Activity 8

C) Teaching Strategy

1)a) Ask: HOW DID YOUR HYPOTHESES ABOUT YORUBA HISTORY STAND UP AFTER LAST NIGHT'S READING? Make a list on the board of the features of Yoruba history which were validated by the data.	The data supports inferences that Yorubas were politically organized as a kingdom believed in plural marriage (polygyny) limited the powers of their kings
b) Ask: WHAT NEW INFORMATION EMERGED FROM YOUR ANALYSIS OF THIS DATA? Add this new information to the list on the board.	Students might say that Yorubas had slaves seemed to be very aggressive believed in the idea of "face." ...
2) Distribute the reading "A Brief History of the Yoruba People." Direct the class to compare these findings with those of anthropologist Morton-Williams. (Allow 5-10 minutes for this exercise.)	
3)a) Ask: IN WHAT WAYS DID OUR ANALYSIS OF YORUBA HISTORY AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THIS READING?	
b) Ask: HOW DID YOUR MENTAL PICTURE OF YORUBA POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AT THE TIME OF KING SHANGO COMPARE WITH THE DIAGRAM OF KING ATIBA'S OYO?	Students will probably not have pictured the specific features of the "checks and balances" but they <u>may</u> have inferred some sort of institutionalized <u>check</u> against the power of the king.

4) Ask: HOW DOES OUR ANALYSIS OF YORUBA HISTORY COMPARE WITH THE DESCRIPTION OFFERRED BY THE PROFESSOR AT A CALIFORNIAN UNIVERSITY?

Students should see that there is growing evidence to support the claims of the "Negro Intellectuals."

5) Direct the students to refer to the last statement defining religion they have entered into their notebooks. Ask: HOW HAS THE RECENT ACTIVITY AFFECTED OUR DEFINITION OF RELIGION? Have students make any changes necessary in their definitions and enter them into their notebooks.

"Religion is...."

6) Direct the students to compare their definition of religion with those located on p. 15 of their booklets and to complete the accompanying study guide for tomorrow.

STUDY GUIDE - ACTIVITY 8

Read the definitions of religion which appear in your booklet on p.
As you do so, look for information which will help you answer the following questions:

1. What seems to be the two most important differences which emerge when these definitions are compared?

   (a) _____

   (b) _____

2. In what ways does this information support or refute ideas about religion that were developed in class?

3. What, after analyzing these definitions, do you consider to be the most important characteristics of religion which set it apart from other human institutions and experiences?

   (1) _____

   (2) _____

   (3) _____

   (4) _____

HANDOUT #1 - Activity 8

A Brief History of the Yoruba People

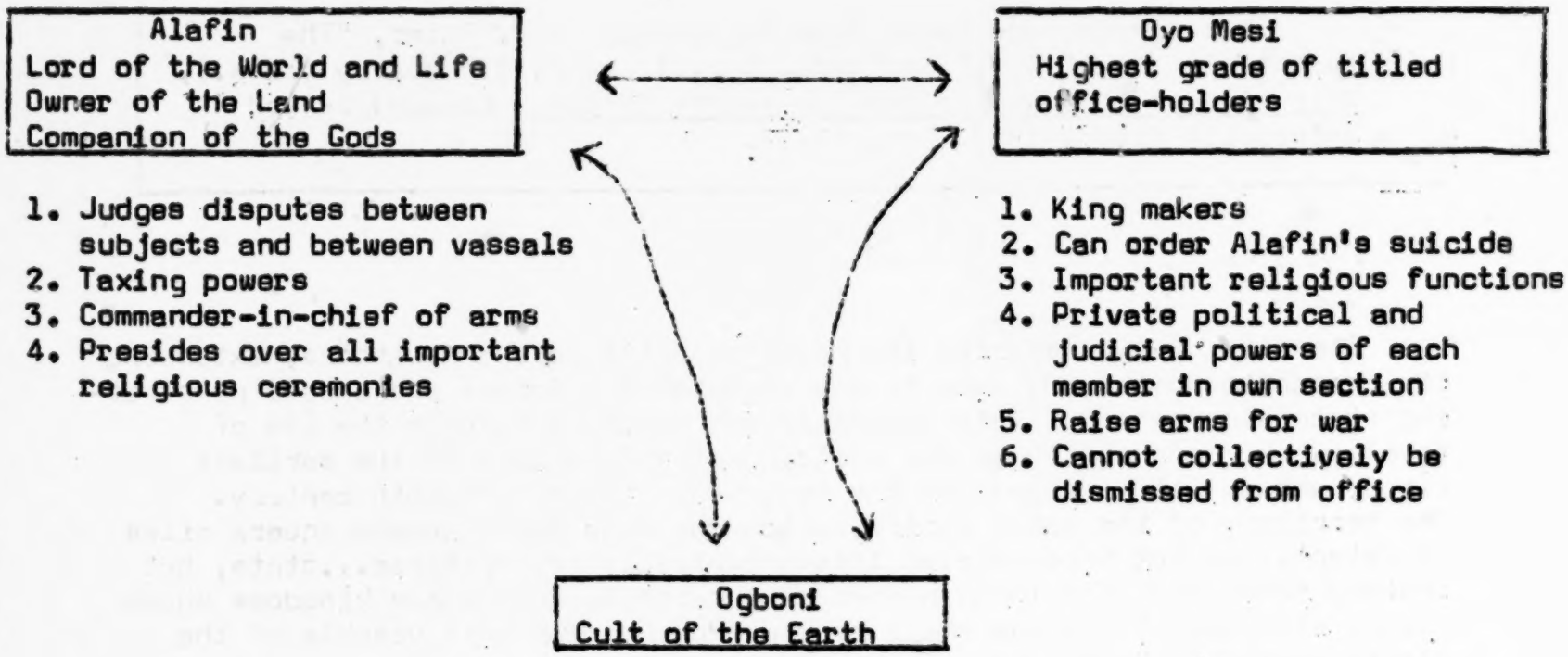
This reading was taken from Marton-Williams, Peter, "The Yoruba Kingdom of Oyo," in Forde, Daryll and P. M. Kaberry (ed's.), West African Kingdoms in the Nineteenth Century. London: Oxford University Press, 1969. pp. 37-69.

The city of Oyo asserted its power over its Yoruba neighbors, extending its conquests southwards down to the edges of the forest and indeed penetrating it to some extent. This expansion was achieved through the use of cavalry. Legends attribute the building of this empire to the earliest kings, who may have reigned at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The territory of the early empire, which was some ten thousand square miles in extent, was not incorporated into a centrally administered...state, but instead consisted of a large number of internally autonomous kingdoms whose rulers were said to derive their crowns from Oyo and were vassals of the Alafin (the "King" of Oyo)....

Oyo began to participate in the coastal trade in slaves with Europeans in the middle of the seventeenth century, using the port of Oiudah....

In the eighteenth century Oyo reached the height of her strength, and in the second half /of that century/ was one of the most powerful and wealthy kingdoms in Africa.... Although the Yoruba could not conceive of government without kingship (they can hardly do so nowadays), they believed that kings in general had a tendency to exploit their immense powers to the disadvantage of their subjects. The powers of the Alafin, however, were limited in practice not only by the ceremonial and ritual restrictions hedging his activities but also by opposing to...these powers the authorities of the Oyo Mesi and the Ogboni cult of the Earth.

In the mid-1830's Atiba changed the site of Oyo to its present location. Below is a diagram of the structure of government during the reign of King Atiba.


Alafin
Lord of the World and Life
Owner of the Land
Companion of the Gods
1. Judges disputes between subjects and between vassals
2. Taxing powers
3. Commander-in-chief of arms
4. Presides over all important religious ceremonies
Oyo Mesi
Highest grade of titled office-holders
1. King makers
2. Can order Alafin's suicide
3. Important religious functions
4. Private political and judicial powers of each member in own section
5. Raise arms for war
6. Cannot collectively be dismissed from office
Ogboni
Cult of the Earth
1. Control rituals at time of coronation and death of Alafin
2. Judicial authority invoked whenever blood is shed
3. Political decisions of Oyo Mesi, particularly in rejection of an Alafin, must be unanimously approved by Ogboni priests

"Checks and Balances of Government in Atiba's Oyo"

ACTIVITY 9

A) Introduction: This is the culminating activity in the unit. It is designed to help crystallize student conceptualization of traditional African religion and religion generally. These ideas might then be applied as hypotheses to guide further inquiry into the functions of religion in Africa or elsewhere in the world.

The specific objectives of this activity are:

To develop conclusions about the features of traditional African religion
To generalize about religion in human society
To apply generalizations to new data

B) Materials: Handout #2

C) Teaching Strategy

1) Ask: WHICH OF THE FOUR DEFINITIONS YOU EXAMINED LAST NIGHT SEEMED TO BE CORRECT? WHY? Allow students 10 minutes or so to discuss this question.

2) Distribute Handout #2. Tell students to take the remainder of the period to respond to the question on the Handout.

3) Collect student responses at the end of the class session.

HANDOUT #2 - ACTIVITY 9

A professor of African history has recently made the following observation about religion in Africa:

> "Most Africans are animists. At its best, animism is a belief that God dwells everywhere; at its worst, a religion full of superstition."

In the space below write your reaction to this statement. Be sure to apply the ideas about African religion and religion generally which we have developed in this unit. Use the reverse side of this generalization if necessary.

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

STUDENT READINGS

Project Africa
Baker Hall
Carnegie-Mellon University
Schenley Park
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION

THE SACRED TREE

This is an excerpt from the story of a youth who grows up in a Kikuyu village in Kenya. Waiyaki, the hero of the story, is being trained by his father to carry on the family tradition of "medicine man" for the villages. As we pick up the story, Waiyaki's father is about to lead him to the most sacred spot of this Kikuyu village.

Waiyaki felt close...

Adapted from James Nugui, The River Between. New York: The Humanities Press, Inc., 1968. pp. 18-19.

...hill of God.

THE MOLIMO FESTIVAL

Anthropologist Colin Turnbull lived among the Ba Mbuti of the Congo for three years. The excerpt appearing below describes an ancient ceremony surrounding the Molimo.

They stood there,..

Adapted from Colin Turnbull, Forest People. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962. pp. 74-80.

...almost overwhelming expectancy.

DEATH BY LIGHTNING

This excerpt is from a novel set in Western Nigeria. It describes the traditional reaction among the Yoruba people to a death by lightning--the death of Joshua, one of the major characters in the novel.

They were in...

Adapted from T. M. Aluko, One Man, One Wife. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1967. pp. 119-122.

...and cloth weaving.

INTERPRETATIONS OF YORUBA RELIGION

Dr. E. Boloji Idowu, a Yoruba Christian, accomplished this work as a portion of the requirements for his Ph.D. degree. He is now connected with Ibadan University in Nigeria. In his Olodumare: God in Yourba Belief, Idowu stresses the supremacy of Olodumare among the variety of deities to be found in the Yoruba pantheon (the sum of all the gods of a people).

In order to...

Adapted from E. Bolaji Idowu, Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966. pp. 48-70.

...above them all.

Dr. Fela Sowande, also a Yoruba chief and presently a professor of African music and religion at Howard University, Washington, D.C., disagrees quite strongly with Dr. Idowu's analysis--feeling that, for one thing, the oral traditions which Idowu used to support his conclusions "must be the weirdest in circulation." Sowande's views have been expressed in a booklet he published titled "Ifa" in 1964.

Oral traditions state...

Fela Sowande, Ifa. (a pamphlet published by the author and available by writing him at Howard University, Washington, D.C.), 1964. pp. 27-39.

...Orangun (formerly Ofun-meji).

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CULTS

Daryll Forde is an English anthropologist who has studied many cultures in West Africa including Yoruba.

The Yoruba have...

Adapted from Daryle Forde, "The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria." in Daryll Forde, (ed.). Ethnographic Survey of Africa. London, S.W.I.: International African Institute, 1962. pp. 29-30.

...that precedes rain.

A VIEW OF AFRICAN HISTORY

This reading is taken from the introduction to a book of readings on present-day Africa. It was written by T. Walter Wallbank, a professor of history at a well-known university in Southern California.

Africa is a...

Adapted from T. Walter Wallbank, Contemporary Africa: Continent In Transition (Revised edition). Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964. An Anvil Original. pp. 14-16.

...or debilitating diseases."

A LIST OF YORUBA KINGS

Adeyemi	
Adelu	c. 1859
Atiba	c. 1838...

Adapted from Samuel Johnson, The History of the Yorubas. London: Rontledge, 1921. appendix.

...Ajaka
Oranyan
Oduduwa.

TRADITION #1

Sango, son of...

Adapted from Samuel Johnson, The History of the Yorubas. London: Rontledge, 1921. pp. 149-152.

...and hanged himself.

TRADITION #2

Sango was a...

E. Bolaji Idowu, Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966. p. 90.

...Sango in Oyo.

RELIGION - THREE DEFINITIONS

1. The expression of...

William Morris, (ed.), The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. Boston: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1969. p. 1099.

A unified system...

Charles Clock and Rodney Stark, Religion and Society in Tension. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965. p. 4.

...adhere to them.

The feelings, acts,

William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study of Human Nature. New York: The Modern Library, 1902. pp. 31-32.

...may consider divine.